

## Committee for Fairness, Equity, and Inclusion (CFEI) Minutes

Minutes for January 20, 2021

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**Present:** Irina Aristarkhova (Chair), Anne Cong-Huyen, Carolyn Kuranz, Dinesh Pal, Karen Thomas-Brown, Mark Allison, Nicolai Lehnert, Sara Ahbel-Rappe, Yi-Su Chen, Sarah Williams

**Absent:** Barry Belmont, Yazier Henry, Alys Peisley, Jason Kosnoski, Holly Sorscher, Carmen Stokes

**Guest:** Rob Sellers, Vice Provost for Equity and Inclusion

10:04 Chair Aristarkhova called the meeting to order.

Chair Aristarkhova gave an overview of the committee's beginning as a combination of three previous committees. She gave an overview of recent work.

Members introduced themselves to guest Vice Provost Sellers.

Vice Provost Sellers stated that diversity, equity, and inclusion travel together. In order for the University to be the best it can be in scholarship, teaching, and service, it needs diverse perspectives across race, ethnicity, politics, gender, sexual orientation, sexual identity, ability, and social class.

Also needed is a climate that is equitable and inclusive. This provides everyone an opportunity to contribute. He described equity as treating everyone according to their own needs, and inclusivity as people feeling like they belong and have a sense of connection to the campus community, and that their perspectives are valued and utilized.

Vice Provost Sellers answered questions from the group.

Pal discussed a neuroscience graduate program and efforts to make it more inclusive. He inquired about what supports the university may provide. Vice Provost Sellers indicated that supports are provided at the college level or at the central university level, and he gave examples, such as the [Center For Engineering Diversity & Outreach](#) that can provide various kinds of support such as tutorial support and connections. The Rackham Graduate School has support through Ombuds space as well as support through their diversity office for diversity issues. CRLT provides support in how to think about ways that curricula is accessible to all students, and to consider whether biases are present in how work is presented. Each school/college has a faculty liaison in CRLT to provide curricular support. This looks at pedagogy and curriculum. He suggested to contact the Dean in the school college, and the DEI liaison.

Kuranz asked about bridge to PhD programs, such as in Engineering.

Vice Provost Sellers responded that there are a number bridge programs on campus, such as in biology, and at Ross. There are also some postdoc to faculty programs. He noted that the challenge with pipeline programs is that the pipeline is not to a specific place. The people involved in bridge programs also need to be involved in admissions and hiring for these programs to really be successful.

Ahbel-Rappe asked what the University can do to make sure campuses are admitting more students of color so the presence of students and others on campus matches their representation in the community.

Vice Provost Sellers noted that the challenge is trying to change. He stated that Prop 2 puts Michigan at a competitive disadvantage relative to other institutions. As an institution, given the large number of applications, the selectivity of UM in Ann Arbor has gone up significantly. Those minorities who are in the top echelon have other opportunities that Michigan can't provide due to Prop 2.

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Vice Provost Sellers noted that the Wolverine Pathways Program works with students from 7-12 grade to provide supplemental educational experiences working with teachers and faculty. The program includes exposure to different programs on campus, which includes working with families. Those who complete the program, if they are admitted, are guaranteed a 4-year scholarship to Ann Arbor or Dearborn. Students also receive support once on campus. This program has resulted in an increase in the number of students who are admitted, for example from Detroit and Ypsilanti.

Vice Provost Sellers noted that Enrollment Management has been working with urban schools such as Chicago, Houston, and LA.

Thomas-Brown asked what Sellers' office is doing to connect Dearborn and Flint. Vice Provost Sellers indicated that the Wolverine Pathways Program partnered with the enrollment management program in Dearborn. His office has also worked with chancellor's office in Flint and with the School of Education in Dearborn. Thomas-Brown noted that the message in Dearborn and Flint are not trickling down. Vice Provost Sellers clarified that the purview of his office is the Ann Arbor campus. DEI initiatives are handled directly by the Dearborn and Flint campuses and the Ann Arbor campus partners with Dearborn and Flint.

Vice Provost Sellers indicated that his office can have conversations with the Flint and Dearborn campuses if they wish to have a partnerships, which could be developed. Vice Provost Sellers indicated that ODEI cares about DEI everywhere. They are open to partnerships.

The following links were shared during the meeting:

Dearborn: <https://umdearborn.edu/faculty-staff/staff-senate/articles/diversity-equity-and-inclusion-dei-updates>

Flint: <https://www.umflint.edu/dei>

National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity: <https://www.facultydiversity.org/>

ODEI office funds memberships for all campuses. Vice Provost Sellers noted that they can be doing better, but Wolverines Pathways is helping. There was discussion about recruiting students of color. Vice Provost Sellers indicated that Prop 2 limits the ability to do this. Students get scholarships from other institutions that are not limited by prop 2.

Chair Aristarkhova asked how accountability can be promoted for inclusivity, especially from deans and senior administrators. Vice Provost Sellers indicated that in his experience as a faculty member, the most important factors had less to do with president and dean, but more to do with colleagues and department chair. The departments are responsible for hiring faculty through search committees. Many decisions are made at the unit level, such as promotion and who gets hired. Vice Provost Sellers asked how we can hold each other accountable. He asked how we can change the way faculty think about what a qualified person is, how we treat each other, and whether we value everyone. He asked further, what type of work do we value? What does our curriculum look like? These kinds of changes will have the biggest impact on day to day lives.

Meeting adjourned: 11:00

Respectfully submitted,

MaryJo Banasik  
Faculty Senate Office